

REMARKS

In the outstanding Office Action, the Examiner rejected claims 1-14. In addition, the Examiner objected to the drawings, in particular Figures 7 and 8. Notwithstanding, Applicants wish to thank the Examiner for indicating that claims 8-14 would be allowable if rewritten to overcome the rejections made under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph as well as rewritten to include all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. By this amendment, Applicants cancel claims 1, 2, 4, 5, 7, and 8, without prejudice or disclaimer, and amend claims 3, 6, and 9-14. With entry of this amendment, claims 3, 6, and 9-14 are pending and under consideration.

Objections to Figs. 7 and 8

The Examiner objected to the drawings and specification due to certain informalities relating to Figs. 7 and 8. In particular, the Examiner indicated that Figs. 7 and 8 should be designated by a legend such as "Prior Art." By this amendment, Applicants amend Figs. 7 and 8 as suggested by the Examiner. In addition, Applicants amend the specification to refer to Figs. 7 and 8 as suggested by the Examiner. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully ask the Examiner to withdraw these objections.

Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph

The Examiner made several rejections to claims 2-14 under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, for indefiniteness. Office Action at pages 2-3. Applicants amend claims 3, 6, and 9-14 to incorporate suggestions of the Examiner, where appropriate. In addition, Applicants amend claims 3, 6, and 9-24 to provide consistency with the

specification and enhance the readability of the claims. Further, Applicants cancel claims 2, 4, 5, 7, and 8. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that at least these amendments and/or cancellations render the rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 112, paragraph 2, moot. Therefore, Applicants respectfully ask the Examiner to withdraw this rejection.

Rejections under 35 U.S.C. §§ 102(b), 103(a)

The Examiner rejected claims 1 and 3-5 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as allegedly anticipated by United States Patent No. 5,784,581 to Hannah ("Hannah"). Office Action at pages 4-6. Further, the Examiner rejected claims 1 and 3-5 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as allegedly anticipated by Japanese Patent Application Publication No. 2000-214954 to Shiga ("954"). Office Action at pages 7-9. In addition, the Examiner rejected claims 2, 6, and 7 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as allegedly unpatentable over Hannah. Office Action at pages 9-10. Lastly, the Examiner rejected claims 2, 6, and 7 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as allegedly unpatentable over 954. Office Action at pages 10-11.

Initially, Applicants cancel claims 1, 2, 4, 5, and 7. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully assert that the Examiner's rejections of these claims are rendered moot.

The Examiner indicated that claim 8 would be allowable if rewritten to include all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Applicants hereby amend claim 3 to incorporate all of the elements of claim 8 and every intervening claim from which claim 8 depends (i.e., claims 4 and 5). In addition, applicants cancel claim 8. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that the Examiner's rejection of claim 3 should be withdrawn.

In addition, claim 6 directly depends from claim 3, as amended. Therefore, Applicants respectfully assert that the Examiner's rejection of claim 6 should be withdrawn for at least the same reason as for claim 3.

Claims 9-14

The Examiner indicated that claims 9-14 are allowable if rewritten to overcome the Examiner's rejections under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph and to include all of the elements of the base claim and any intervening claims. Office Action at page 12.

As stated above, Applicants amend claims 9-14 to overcome the rejections under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph. Further, as-filed claims 9-14 include all of the elements of the base claim and any intervening claims. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that claims 9-14 are allowable over the cited art.


Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and reexamination of this application and the timely allowance of the pending claims.

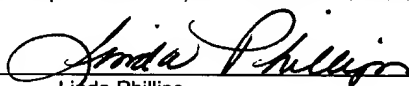
Please grant any extension of time required to enter this response and charge any additional required fees to Deposit Account 06-0916.

Respectfully submitted,

FINNEGAN, HENDERSON, FARABOW,
GARRETT & DUNNER, L.L.P.

Dated: July 21, 2004

By: 
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Date: <u>July 21, 2004</u>	Signed:  Linda Phillips